

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00
FAA-00 /089 W
-----115775 112127Z /63

R 110900Z JAN 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5463
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMCONUSL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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ROME FOR RCAA AND FAA REP

BRUSSELS FOR FAA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, JA, IZ
SUBJECT: IRAQI AIRWAYS TO INITATE SERVICE TO JAPAN AND SHOWS INTEREST
IN FLIGHTS TO U.S.

1. WITH THE DELIVERY OF ELEVEN NEW BOEING AIRCRAFT (TWO 747'S
AND THREE EACH 707'S, 727'S, AND 737'S) IN THE PAST THREE
YEARS, IRAQI AIRWAYS (IA) HAS BEEN EXPANDING BOTH ITS DOMESTIC
AND INTERNATIONAL SERVICES. THOUGH THE IRAQI PRESS HAS FROM
TIME TO TIME REPORTED THE FORMATION AND MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES
TO PLAN IA'S EXPANSION, THE GOI HAS SO FAR NOT ANNOUNCED AN
OVERALL SCHEME FOR IA'S ROUTE STRUCTURE. HOWEVER, TWO
RECENT NEWS ITEMS PROVIDE SOME INDICATIONS OF WHAT THE GOI MAY
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INTEND.

2. THE IRAQI NES AGENCY CARRIED AN INTERVIEW DECEMBER
30, 1977 WITH MR. ABDUL KARIM AL-NEDA, PRESIDENT OF
IRAQI STATE ORGANIZATION FOR CIVIL AVIATION, ON THE
OCCASION OF HIS RETURN HOME FROM A TRIP TO THE FAR EAST.
HE DISCLOSED THAT HE HAD SIGNED A PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT

WHICH WOULD ALLOW IRAQI AIRWAYS TO BEGIN SERVICE TO TOKYO BEGINNING IN THE SUMMER OF 1978 AND FOR JAPAN AIRLINES (JAL) TO BEGIN SERVICE TO BAGHDAD IN LATE 1978. THE IRAQI AIRWAYS FLIGHT TO TOKYO WOULD BE AN EXTENSION OF ITS SERVICE TO THE PERSIAN GULF, INDIA AND BANGKOK AND WOULD INCLUDE A STOPOVER IN HONG KONG. HE ALSO MENTIONED HE STOPPED IN BANGKOK TO DISCUSS THE GRANTING OF PASSENGER RIGHTS FOR THE BANGKOK-TOKYO SEGMENT.

3. IN ADDITION, IN A SEPARATE ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE IRAQI PRESS ON DECEMBER 29, IRAQI DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER ASKAR MAHMOUD SAID THAT IRAQ IS "STUDYING"THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS TO "AMERICA" IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SERVICE TO ARAB RESIDENTS THERE.

4. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF THE GROWING JAPANESE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN IRAQ, THE INITIATION OF SERVICE BETWEEN BAGHDAD AND TOKYO IS LIKELY TO BE PROFITABLE FOR BOTH IA AND JAL. THE ROUTING OF IA'S FLIGHT THROUGH HONG KONG, HOWEVER, POSES A QUESTION AS TO WHAT INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT, IF ANY, THE GOI HAS MADE FOR THIS STOPOVER. FOR EASONS WHICH EVEN THE IRAQIS ARE HARD PUT TO RECALL, THE GOI OFFICIALLY BOYCOTTS GOODS AND SERVICES FROM HONG KONG. POSSIBLY THE HONG KONG STOP-OVER IS COVERED BY IRAQI-UK AGREEMENTS.

5. THERE HAS BEEN SPECULATION THAT IA WOULD WANT TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INITIATE SERVICE FROM BAGHDAD TO NEW YORK, PROBABLY VIA LONDON, EVER SINCE IA ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO PURCHASE NEW BOEING AIRCRAFT IN 1974. THE STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, HOWEVER, IS THE THE FIRST TIME A RANKING GOI OFFICIAL HAS PUBLICLY INDICATED INTEREST. WE ARE NOT SURE WHETHER GOI OFFICIALS ARE AWARE THAT SERVICE TO THE US WOULD LIKELY REQUIRE A NEW BILATERAL CIVIAL AVIATION AGREEMENT AUTHORIZING THE ROUTE, AN UNLIKELY EVENT IN USINT'S OPINION AT LEAST UNTIL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ARE RESTORED. CONCEIVABLE THE GOI MAY MISTAKENLY BELIEVE THAT ITS LIFTING IN JULY 1976 OF ITS BAN ON THE LANDING IN IRAQ OF NON-SCHEDULED US-REGISTERED AIRCRAFT CLEARS WAY FOR SCHEDULED OPERATIONS TO THE US BY IRAQI AIRWAYS.
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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